

Edinburgh waits till September for new Bike Hire Scheme

After such a long wait it will be a few more months until the new bike hire scheme is introduced in Edinburgh.

We spoke to CEO of Transport for Edinburgh (TfE) George Lowder who explained that it will be a few months yet before we get to try them out. But on Friday there were half a dozen for city councillors and others involved in the partnership to have a shot on the Royal Mile.

George said : “You can see the bikes on the streets here as the deal is signed, and there will be an increasing presence with a formal launch in September.”

Councillor Lesley Macinnes, Transport and Environment Convener and Chair of Transport for Edinburgh, said: “It’s fantastic to see plans for a cycle hire scheme in Edinburgh move one step closer, benefitting from Serco’s expertise in this area.

“We have been keen to introduce a scheme of this kind for some time now, so I’m delighted to see the exciting and innovative plans for its implementation unfold. Once in place, I would expect to see more and more people, residents and businesses alike, use these bikes and e-bikes, alongside our improving and developing cycle infrastructure, to explore Edinburgh on two wheels.”

Our bike hire scheme will be here in the autumn – in time for the start of the academic year [@EdinburghUni](#) [@SercoGroup](#) [@Edinburgh_CC](#) pic.twitter.com/fyJ6Il5oIf

– Edinburgh Reporter (@EdinReporter) [May 19, 2018](#)

The University of Edinburgh's Vice-Chancellor and Principal, Professor Peter Mathieson, said: "We are delighted to be an official partner in a scheme that will provide a cheap, healthy and fun way to explore our city. It is an initiative that is in line with our commitment to support our students, staff and visitors to travel by bike, to reduce environmental impact and to promote wellbeing. We are pleased to do our part in helping the City of Edinburgh Council meet its target of 15 per cent of Edinburgh residents cycling to work by 2020."



Deputy Leader of the City of Edinburgh Council, Cammy Day, CEO of Transport for Edinburgh George Lowder, Transport Convener Lesley Macinnes and CFO of Serco Angus Cockburn

It is the unique hybrid lock which allows for physical docking stations and a 'geofenced' area meaning that the city's streets will not be compromised by even more street furniture.

A Memorandum of Understanding between Transport for Edinburgh and The University of Edinburgh will ensure that the university is an active partner in the scheme and we understand that there will be docking stations on university property. The university has already stated that it aims to be

carbon neutral by 2040.



Transport Convener Lesley Macinnes, Angus Cockburn CFO of Serco, Deputy Council Leader Cammy Day and CEO of Transport for Edinburgh, George Lowder

There will be 500 manual bikes and 100 e-bikes delivered in the three year concession agreement, with 200 promised by the start of the academic year in September and 500 by next spring. The bikes will be rolled out in the city centre first including locations at Waverley and Edinburgh University.

Angus Cockburn, Chair of Serco Scotland and CFO of Serco said : “We have had a very successful bike scheme in London now for many years and we feel that Edinburgh is a perfect location for a bike scheme. It is already very cycle friendly and there will be both environment and health benefits to the city. We are very focussed on making sure that this is a big success. We have the innovation of electric bikes which we don’t have in London.”

We asked Mr Cockburn in particular about the way the bikes are specially made to cope with the Edinburgh hills. He said : “Well there is a rumour that The Mound is very hard to get up so Pashley have designed a bike especially for Edinburgh and

its hills so the gears are calibrated in a different way. Hopefully it will make it easier for people and if its too hard people can always use electric bikes.”

As an Edinburgh resident Mr Cockburn has a particular interest in introducing the bike hire scheme to his home city. He said : ” Yes I do live in Edinburgh and attended Edinburgh University where I was an Honorary professor, so I am really keen that this is successful for Edinburgh and for the university too.”